(d) if so, the reasons therefor and by when the revision of the pattern of subsidy of plant protection chemicals is likely to take place?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The incidence of pests, diseases and weeds varies from crop to crop. Accordingly, assistance for plant protection chemicals was extended at different rates under different crop production schemes.

(c) and (d) The grant of assistance on plant protection chemicals has been reviewed and rationalised under some of the schemes. Besides, the scope of Central assistance for promotion and adoption of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) has been enlarged.

Area under Foodgrains and Horticulture Crops

7124. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the area under cultivation of foodgrains and horticulture crops in the country;

(b) the number of farmers engaged in the production of foodgrains and horticulture Crops;

(c) the increase in Budget provisions or agriculture in the Central Budget for 1994-95;

(d) whether it is a fact that the increased provision will benefit only big farmers; and

(e) how Government propose to ensure welfare of small and marginal farmers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ARVIND NETAM): (a) According to Land Use Statistics 1990-91 (latest available), the area under cultivation of foodgrains and horticulture (which includes fruits, vegetables, condiments and spices, spices, coconut, drugs, narcotics and other plantation crops) was 140.20 million hectares.

(b) The total number of farmers engaged in the production of foodgrains and horticulture crops is not available. However, the number of cultivators producing all crops is placed at 110.6 million.

(c) Plan allocation for agriculture for 1994-95 has been increased by Rs. 90|- crores over 1993-94.

(d) The increased budget provision would benefit all the farmers including small and marginal farmers.

(e) There is a condition in the implementation of the crop oriented programmes that as far as possible, the benefit should flow to the small and marginal farmers and 25 per cent of benefit should flow to SC and ST farmers.

Cashewnut Production

7125. SHRI V. GOPALSAMY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to newsitem captioned "Cashew growers in dire straits as prices slumps" which appeared in the 'Indian Express' dated 22nd April, 1994; if so, what is the reaction of Government thereon;

(b) what has been cashew nut production in the country during the last three years, year-wise and state-wise figures;

(c) what has been the highest and lowest prices of raw cashew nuts during this period, year-wise and State-wise figures;

(d) whether the Central Government initiated any scheme or steps